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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council members condemn "grave events" in Haiti and call for restoration of legitimate Government.

- General Assembly to take up new agenda item -- "Crisis of democracy and human rights in Haiti" on Monday, 7 October.

- General Assembly is addressed by President of Nigeria and by Foreign Ministers of Madagascar, Myanmar, Chile and Yemen. Foreign Ministers of Lao People's Democratic Republic, Togo, Congo, Djibouti and Cape Verde, Permanent Representative of Vanuatu, also address Assembly.

- Secretary-General calls on international community to step up efforts to ensure adequate standard of shelter for all mankind, in message to mark World Habitat Day, 7 October.

- Legal Committee debates workings of the Security Council, veto rights, the composition and size of the Council and its "selectivity" of approach.

- United States urges Decolonization Committee to become more responsive to needs of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

- Anti-Apartheid Committee welcomes awarding of 1991 Nobel Literature Prize to South African novelist Nadine Gordimer.

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Members of the Security Council last night strongly condemned the "grave events" in Haiti and called for the restoration of the legitimate Government, according to a statement read by the President of the Council, Chinmaya Rajaninath Gharekhan of India. He made that statement following an address to the Council members by the President of Haiti, Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

The Council convened in response to a request made by Haiti on 30 September that it consider the situation in Haiti and its consequences for regional stability.

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In his opening remarks, the Council President said the "violent usurpation of the legitimate democratic authority and power" in Haiti "deserved to be strongly condemned". Most Council members supported the efforts the Organization of American States (OAS) was making to resolve the situation.

In his address to the Council, President Aristide said the international community must decide not for, but with, the Haitian people, to cry "no" to the dictatorship. With the help of the international community, Haiti had been able to hold free elections. With further help, Haiti would also be able to save its threatened democracy, he said.

The representative of Honduras, speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, told the Council that OAS had decided to send a delegation to Haiti to inform the junta that the coup d'état was unacceptable. The delegation, which he said would leave on Friday, 4 October, was to consist of the Secretary-General of the OAS and the Foreign Ministers of Argentina, Bolivia, Canada, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, United States and Venezuela.

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The General Assembly will take up a new agenda item -- "Crisis of democracy and human rights in Haiti" on Monday, 7 October. The request for the inclusion of the new item was made by Honduras, on behalf of the OAU.

In a letter to the Secretary-General yesterday, the Permanent Representative of Honduras, Roberto Flores Bermudez, current Chairman of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, said the urgency of the request was obvious. The constitutional order had been brutally overthrown, the media were reporting that many lives had been lost and that repressive measures were being taken in an effort to consolidate the perpetrators of the coup d'état. Accordingly, he said, there was an urgent need for the Haitian people to feel that the international community supported their legitimate democratic aspirations and that, at the same time, for those who had usurped power to know that their inadmissible behaviour could not succeed.

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Opening this morning's debate in the General Assembly, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Madagascar, Césaire Rebenoro, said that his country was favourable to the convening of an international conference on the financing of development in order to consider all the possibilities to find additional resources to that end.

He underlined the seriousness of the economic crisis that the African countries are presently facing, arguing that their national adjustment plans would not be successful if the industrialized nations did not contribute to reducing the financial burden of the developing countries by writing off their debt and by channelling additional financial assistance.

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In his statement, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar, U Ohn Gyaw, addressed the fight against drug abuse, which he called the "foremost social problem in the world today".

He said that at the bilateral level, Myanmar's active cooperation with neighbouring countries in drug abuse control was making significant headway. Following two rounds of discussion in which representatives of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) participated, an agreement for Myanmar-Thai cooperation on a wide range of anti-narcotics activities was signed by representatives of the two Governments in March. Later this year a similar agreement was entered into with China. Talks with Lao People's Democratic Republic on bilateral cooperation in drug abuse control had also been held and similar talks with Viet Nam were being prepared.

The President of Nigeria, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, told the Assembly that as the review of the United Nations Programme of Action for Africa's Economic Recovery and Development had shown, the overall performance of the African economy since 1986 had been dismal. The reasons could be attributed mainly to the debt burden, the collapse of commodity prices, the low levels of resource-flows from the developed countries, as well as natural calamities.

The Nigerian President then addressed the coming election of a new Secretary-General of the United Nations, saying that Africa's case for the office had been misinterpreted to mean special pleading. However, he said, the African case was based on competence and justice. Africa strongly believed that the next Secretary-General should be an African. He called on the rest of the world to apply a proper sense of justice in considering the appointment of a new chief of the United Nations.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile, Enrique Silva-Cimma, told the Assembly that now that the international community had begun to be aware of environmental problems with the holding of the Conference next summer in Brazil, it must also face up equally resolutely to the social problems. For that purpose, he said, there was no alternative multilateral forum to the United Nations system. That was why Chile strongly supported the holding of a world summit for social development.

In his statement, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Yemen, Abdulkarim Al-Eryany, said that in the aftermath of all the complications and the grave military developments witnessed during the Gulf war, the region should work to remove the barriers between the countries. If Europe, he said, with all its nationalities and the disputes that were prevailing, had managed to build its cooperation on common denominators, the Middle East must realize that the bonds that tie it together were not only bonds of nationality and religion, but also of history, geography, language and common fate.

The Yemeni Minister said all countries of the region, including Iraq should participate in that process, which should have as a point of departure, the enabling of the people of Iraq to get over its plight. That required, he said, that the international community should lift the sanctions against Iraq for humanitarian reasons now accepted by most countries.

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The Foreign Minister of Lao People's Democratic Republic, Phoune Sipaseuth, said that south-east Asia was witnessing a new era of cooperation in the economic, social and technical fields.

Speaking about the Cambodian situation, Mr. Sipaseuth welcomed the recent negotiations held in Pattaya, Thailand; in Peking, China; and at United Nations Headquarters in New York, which had enabled different Cambodian parties to come to an agreement on putting an end to the conflict in the region. The Lao People's Democratic Republic, he noted, was expanding its own economic and commercial relations with other countries, with the view to promote the spirit of good will among the nations.

In his statement this afternoon, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Togo, Aboudou Toure Cheaka, said that the developing countries were fully aware of their primary responsibility in the field of economic and social development. That is why, he said, a number of initiatives had been taken to promote and strengthen South-South cooperation, while continuing to develop North-South cooperation.

Mr. Cheaka drew attention to the importance of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, which had been signed during the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the OAU, held in Abuja, Nigeria in June. It was in the same spirit that the South Commission had submitted its timely and appropriate recommendations at the July regular session of the Economic and Social Council in Geneva. These recommendations, he said, clearly indicated that the South was mainly responsible for its own economic development.

The Permanent Representative of Vanuatu, Robert F. Van Lierop, said the decolonization process, particularly that under way in New Caledonia, continued to be a major concern of the countries in the Pacific. The positive measures taken by France to assure tranquility in the Territory, and to promote the economic and social development of its colonized people were much appreciated, he said. What would be even more appreciated would be the moment New Caledonia gained its independence and joined the community of nations as did the two neighbouring Pacific island countries, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands, at this Assembly session.

In his statement, the Foreign Minister of the Congo, Jean Blaise Kololo, said that the overall performance of the African economy in the past few years had not been satisfactory. The debt burden, the collapse of commodity prices and the low levels of resource-flow from the developed countries were the main reasons he quoted for the economic crisis in Africa. He expressed the hope that a quick conclusion to the Uruguay Round negotiations would enable the developing countries to begin the path to recovery.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Djibouti, Moumin Bahdon Farah, said that recent events in Ethiopia and Somalia had produced a large number of refugees in the Horn of Africa. Djibouti, he said, had given shelter to about 85,000 of them, which represented a huge burden for his country.

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He stressed that political will was needed at the present time to put an end to the suffering of refugees. At his country's initiative, he reported, two preparatory conferences had taken place in order to bring about national reconciliation in Somalia. The peace agreement that resulted from these talks, he explained, was the only viable framework for the establishment of a genuine democratic society in Somalia. He urged the international community to play an active role -- as it is in the case of Yugoslavia -- in seeking a peaceful resolution to Somalia's conflict.

In his statement, the Foreign Minister of Cape Verde, Jorge Carlos Fonseca, said the democratic process taking place in his country was a valuable contribution to the global effort of democratization and respect for the liberty and fundamental rights of all humans.

He said any violation of human rights should be "condemned outright" by the United Nations. Lately, he said, the world had witnessed all sorts of crimes against the populations of certain countries torn by civil war. "What is more alarming", he said, "is that the United Nations witnesses all these crimes, incapable of taking measures to save lives and protect the defenseless population". He called for better mechanisms and more efficient United Nations action to respond to such situations. Although the principle of sovereignty was a sacred principle, he said, it should be seen as "a shield to protect the people" and not "a sword used against their basic rights".

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In a message to mark World Habitat Day on Monday, 7 October, Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar has called on the international community, including Governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and community groups all over the world to step up their efforts to ensure an adequate standard of shelter for all of humanity.

In his message, the Secretary-General said it was a task of "daunting proportions" to meet the needs of the more than 1 billion people who today did not have adequate shelter. These difficulties must not, however, he said, affect the efforts to actively pursue the objective of adequate shelter for all. The United Nations, through its Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), established in 1978, was committed to assist Governments, particularly those of developing countries, to expand their efforts for human settlements development.

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Speakers in the General Assembly's Sixth Committee (Legal) today, continuing discussion on the report of the Charter Committee, supported the draft declaration on fact-finding by the United Nations.

While some agreed that fact-finding missions should obtain the consent of receiving States, others cited "grey areas" in situations of grave conflict

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and the duration of such missions. The representative of Papua New Guinea suggested that the right to request a fact-finding mission be extended to peoples, as well as to States.

Some speakers called for further consideration of a working paper submitted by the Soviet Union on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. The representative of Guatemala called on the Charter Committee to devote itself to the issue of the composition and size of the Security Council, saying the Council's size had not expanded with United Nations membership. New trends, he said, such as the "community trend" demonstrated by the European Community should be studied.

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The Decolonization Committee should become more responsive to the unique needs of the people in the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, leaving out the rhetoric that had little relevance to the actual situation of the Territories. This view was expressed this morning by the representative of the United States, Shirin Tahir-Kheli, as the General Assembly's Fourth Committee (Decolonization) began to debate on activities of foreign, economic and other interests impeding implementation of the General Assembly's 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

Among others making statements, Alexander Slaby of Czechoslovakia said that it had been hoped that the cessation of ideological confrontation between East and West would bring about more realistic and rational texts in the draft of resolutions. However, he noted, the draft before the Committee still contained the old-fashioned provisions and unacceptable name-calling of recent years.

The Committee was also expected to discuss military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration, which might be impeding the implementation of the Declaration on Decolonization.

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The Special Committee against Apartheid has welcomed the awarding of the 1991 Nobel Prize for literature to novelist Nadine Gordimer, whom it calls "a staunch opponent of apartheid" who had long been associated with the work of the Committee.

In a statement issued today, the Chairman of the Committee, Ibrahim A. Gambari of Nigeria, called Ms. Gordimer, "a worthy daughter of Africa". The award was a fitting tribute to a person who had for a long time contributed much through her novels, other writings and activities to the exposure of the inequities of apartheid and the mobilization of international public opinion against it.

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